



A-Antics



Kimber Meet A Huge Success!
Rowdie Calendar Of Events
Early Rowdie Bad Axe Days
Member's Profile Section



MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF NORTH AMERICAN MGA REGISTER

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History: The Chapter was established August 14, 1976. It was NAMGAR's first chapter. We are a low-key club, dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of our MGA's/ Anyone is welcome to join our chapter and they are asked to join NAMGAR as well.

Chapter Dues: \$20 annually (\$25 for printed newsletter)

Nickname: Rowdies

Motto: People First!

Rowdies Site: www.mgcars.org.uk

MG Web Site: www.mgcars.uk

NAMGAR Web Site: www.namgar.com

Past Chapter Chairmen:

1976-1980	Bruce Nichols
1981-1982	Tom Latta
1983-1984	Dick Feight
1985-1988	Dave Smith
1989-1990	Dave Quinn
1991-1994	Mark Barnhart
1995-1995	Herb Maier
1996-1996	Tom Knoy
1997-1998	Neil Griffin
1999-2002	Bruce Nichols
2003-2004	Bob Sutton
2005-2008	Gordie Bird

ROWDIES 2010 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

OFFICIAL ROWDIE events are in “**Bold**” print; other events of interest are in “*Italics*”

MAY

- 1 Drive Your MGA Day Nationwide**
- 15 Rowdies Gymkhana, Ypsilanti.**
Curt Smith/John Burchwell hosts
- 21 – 23 Carlisle Import Show*

JUNE

- 6 Orphan Car Show & Rowdie Meet, Ypsilanti & Belleville. Neil Griffin host**
- 6 Fort Megs Perrysburg Ohio*
- 17 – 20 MG Vintage Racers Focus Event Mosport Raceway, Ontario, Canada*
- 18 – 20 Stratford Festival, Ontario, Canada, Philip Wiltshire host**
- 26 – 27 Sloan Car Show Flint MI*
- 26-27 MGB National in Belleville, Ontario*
- 28-30 Put-In-Bay Historic Races, Ohio*

JULY

- 1-3 GOF Central, Huron Ohio (note: follows Put-In-Bay Race Reunion above)*
- 11 Mad Dogs event, Gilmore Museum, Hickory Corners**
- 26 – 30 NAMGAR GT-35 Delavan WI**

AUGUST

- 21 Rowdies Birthday Party, Rockford. Mac McDonnell host**
- 22 Grattan Vintage Races, Belding. Mac McDonnell host**

SEPTEMBER

- 9-12 U.S. Vintage Grand Prix, Watkins Glen Int'l Raceway*
- 11 Lemon Creek Winery British Show, Berrien Springs. Bruce Nichols host**
- 12 Battle of Brits, Orchard Lake**
- 25 – 26 British day at Waterford Hills Race Track*

OCTOBER

- 16 Color Tour & Campfire, Ann Arbor. Bill Weakley host**

NOVEMBER nothing planned

DECEMBER

- 4 Rowdies Christmas Party, Jackson. Dave Quinn host**

FEBRUARY 2011

- 19 Rowdies ANNUAL BUSINESS MEET, Holt. Dave Smith host**



Your editor displays the fine type of British “Motors” that would be found in the garage of any English gentleman in day’s past, as seen on display at the Rowdie Kimber Meet. Were you there? If not, be sure to make it next year!

MEMBERS PAGE

Members Update:

Rumor has it that Neil Griffin has recovered faster from his new valve job than any of Steve Holliday's engines or transmissions ever have from a full rebuild. Neil writes:

"I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the Rowdies for your thoughts, words, and cards after my March 5 Open Heart Surgery. It went fine and I'm now headed down that somewhat lengthy recovery road, and look forward to seeing you all again this summer."

Judging from Neil's appearance at the Kimber Meet, I'd say his recovery is coming along just fine. GREAT WORK NEIL, WE'RE GLAD TO SEE YOU BACK!

Rowdies Website:

Larry Pittman, Webmaster

<http://www.mgcars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/>

Mac McDonnell's Database Report:

74 Active and Paid-Up Members

Welcome New Members

Win \$50

The Rowdies will have a drawing at each meet for a gift certificate worth \$50 in merchandise from Jeff Zorn's Little British Car Co.

We hope to see some new faces at our meets and encourage you to bring a friend to join. All paid-up members are eligible for the raffle to determine each meet's winner.

Classified Ads

Personal for sale or wanted classified ads are free to all paid-up members. Commercial ad rates: Full page \$40 issue/\$200 year; 1/2 page \$25 issue/\$135 year; 1/4 page \$20 issue/\$110 year; Business Card \$10 issue/\$55 year.

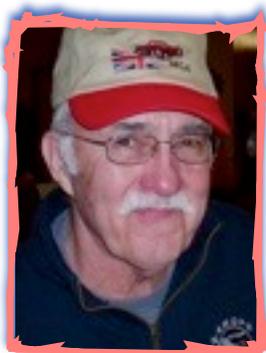
Total ads may not exceed 12-1/2% (2 pgs of 16); ads accepted on first come, first served basis.

Send Email & Address Changes to Editor.

Deadline for submitting material
for the next issue is: June 20, 2010



REMEMBER: As a good Rowdie, don't forget to let your spouse have some of the fun by getting her/his "hands on" time with the MGA also.



CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

I have some announcements from the national to share following the Board's annual February meeting.

NAMGAR has announced a dues increase. National dues will increase from \$30 to \$37.50 annually effective August 1, 2010. NAMGAR will be producing membership cards with a personal number that will allow you to log into the members only portion of NAMGAR's new web site, which reportedly will offer vendor discounts. NAMGAR is also introducing a membership drive. Any current member who encourages three new people to join NAMGAR receives a free year's membership. The final announcement is that a NAMGAR site has been established on Facebook.

On the local scene I wish to thank our webmaster Larry Pittman for setting up the secure members only section on the Rowdies' site. A club membership listing is now available for your viewing or to download for printing. I wish to thank club members who helped move the project along. The communications benefits seem obvious to most. To date, 89% of our members have provided an email address and 72% a cell phone number. Thank You All. If you have not done so yet, contact Larry at larrypit@chartermi.net or call 810-750-0047 to add yours.

Michigan's winter snow has melted. We can see the grass again, smell the warm spring air,

and if you are like me you are saying to yourself why did I put off those MGA winter projects thinking I had more time. One day it's winter and the next it's top down time. The neat thing about living in Michigan is we can really appreciate it when the season's change. Suddenly there is a line-up at the local auto part's store. UPS deliveries pickup. Birds sing. Garage doors open. MG's pop out. And Rowdies are grabbing a spanner to bring their MG to life.

Speaking of tools, if you're like me you have a number of Craftsman tools and other items purchased from Sears in you're house and garage. Did you ever wonder who actually made these items. I know I have. Here's a neat web site that takes the mystery out of that: <http://owwm.com/Craftsman/manufacturers.aspx?sort=1>

A recent Reader's Digest report advices that travel in Michigan is safer than most states, even if our road conditions are not too great. When it comes to the "best roads", Wisconsin, site of GT-35, ranks in the top three states with the best roads in the country; Kansas and Montana were the other two. It's no surprise that Michigan was in 27th place. Yep, we have some crappy roads but anyone who's traveled the Pennsylvania turnpike can understand why PA was ranked 47th. Alabama and Mississippi topped the list for speeding deaths, while MI was 6th from the bottom, well below the national average. Either we don't speed much or we know how to drive. DUI fatalities had Montana and South Carolina leading the pack, with MI ninth from the bottom. Now that you know it's safe to travel, crank up the MG for summer adventures as we have some great Rowdies meets planned. ***Dave Quinn***

WHAT WENT WRONG?

Reprinted from the Emerald Necklace MG Register Newsletter-"The eChatter" 9-09

(Ed. Note: This is Part Two in a Two-Part series and continues from the Mar-April A-Antics)

However, despite the connections that Morris may have had (to the British government), Leonard Lord of the Austin group, became CEO at the same time the government increased its financial stake in the new Corporation to 20% of the stock. Morris was already in semi-retirement so this choice was no great burden to either him or his fellow Directors who had been waiting for the day that Morris would step down. A great leader but not one to share power! As a Morris Director once said, "The best meeting to have with the Boss is not to turn up". With a Morris man in the number two spot it was expected that Leonard Lord would start to integrate the two empires to cut costs and bring the best of the best together. Nothing could have been further from the truth!

He refused to integrate any part of the new corporation; Austin workers would remain Austin, and Morris workers Morris. No combination of design or development, no cooperative research, no exchange of management skills, in short nothing to make the two great corporations stronger and more productive. Each division stood or fell on its own merit. This meant that the overhead costs remained much the same; the labor force was over-staffed with multi-duplication at all levels of management.

Dealerships were still divided into Morris and Austin with no encouragement to cut costs and combine brand names. Within two years it was obvious that this merger was not working, costs increased, production fell, and labor disputes increased as the workers from both sides tried to outdo each other on wage negotiations.

The government had changed and a new conservative attitude was the order of the day. The 20% investment in B.M.C. would be increased to 25% if Lord implemented a few economic cuts and got the corporation back into the black. Remember we are talking about many millions of dollars when a government increases its investment with taxpayer's money. Lord wanted a new production plant and the

government wanted to reduce the unemployment in the north of England so it all made sense. To them anyway!

To the workers based in the thriving midlands of Britain, especially at Coventry, the home of British Motor production (like Detroit is in the USA) this investment did not make much sense, especially when Lord decided under government direction that the Austin range of engines were the only power units to be used throughout BMC. At Cowley the Morris Mini was ready to go into production with its unique cross power engine, and at Abingdon the MGA was already an export winner. Change engines? What nonsense!

A boardroom rift erupted which led to a head to head showdown between Lord and his board. B.M.C almost collapsed but once again the government stepped in increasing its interest by another five percent and increasing its presence on the board. A sad day for the British Motor industry that was now virtually a semi-nationalized industry, with all the problems of a bureaucracy, and none of the benefits associated with private corporate mergers.

By the early 1960s the number of British Motor Manufacturers had reduced dramatically. Bristol and AC had gone in company with Singer, Standard, Allard, and Armstrong-Siddeley. The Rootes Group (Hillman, Sunbeam etc.), another government amalgamation, were in serious trouble and was eventually sold by the government to an American motor company for a token ten dollars on the understanding that they would maintain production for an agreed ten years after purchase.

In reality the end result of this give-away was asset stripping with nothing left of the once prosperous Rootes Group in two short years. About eight thousand workers lost their jobs. Mr. DeLorean did much the same thing twenty years later when Prime Minister Thatcher, the iron lady, was taken in by DeLorean and sixty five million of the British taxpayers money was wasted on a production factory in Northern Ireland. The world famous "Mini" hit the market in late 1959; first as the Morris Mini, then as the Austin Mini. Apart from the badge on the front they were identical cars.

The first year was not a success as the early

cars had a tendency to stop in wet weather. After several months of study it was found that the front skirt was designed the wrong way round which allowed rainwater to enter the low front grill and drown the Lucas electrics. A modification to this area solved the problem, and by 1960 several Minis had won various international events throughout Europe.

One such car endured the East African three-week rally and won in its class against the best that Europe and the US could produce. Another drove across Australia east to west, then just to show how good these cars were did the north to south route. The movie "The Italian Job" completed the marketing activity for the Mini when four production cars leaped the roofs of Milan and navigated the sewers to complete a gold robbery. I remember leaving the movie house after seeing that film and going off the next day to buy my first but not last Mini.

The policy of putting different badges on the same car became the progressive marketing policy of the British motor manufacturers. The idea was simple; stick a few bits of extra chrome on the outside and a polished plastic wood dash on the interior and you could take the standard Morris or Austin family car and turn it into an up market Riley or Wolseley which would sell for more money. The basic car was exactly the same but these extra trinkets moved it into a higher price range. Strange as it may seem the British public went along with this policy, in fact it was possible to buy the extra adornments yourself and spruce up the family sedan for a fraction of the dealer's price.

Even the popular Mini went through this adornment with a Mini DeLux at about one thousand dollars more. The actual changes were a few extra bits of chrome in the front and a couple of extra gauges inside displayed in a plastic frame. This type of activity did not involve any major investment in new production techniques or even a progressive design operation. The quick buck was the order of the day with quality control virtually forgotten even for such cars as Jaguar who managed to lose their hold on the export market by the early 1970s.

One has to ask what Detroit was doing during the heyday of the British sports car? The Corvette was the only serious challenge to the British dominance and that was never a mass market vehicle. Ford did produce the famous Mustang that continues to hold its own

against any foreign import but that was it. Had there been a serious challenge from the American side both the quality and service facilities for such cars as the MG, Triumph and Mini would have improved. By 1970 the market for most British vehicles in the US had disappeared except for the sports vehicles.

The most successful of these, despite the lack of modern design was the MGB, a typical British rust bucket with a power unit that was antique compared with the Japanese imports. However, it sold 620,000 vehicles in the USA during its long life span of eighteen years. Second in line was the Triumph which was, on paper, out of the same stable through the creation of the British Motor Corporation, but in reality this was never true. As previously mentioned the CEO, Leonard Lord, did not allow any part of the corporation to work together or share development. In short, each production unit stood or fell on its own performance which led to yet another problem that today seems almost beyond belief.

BMC management felt that they could negotiate different pay scales for different factories despite the fact that the unions were national and negotiated on a national basis. If you paid a worker \$5 an hour to fit wheels, that rate of reward should be universal throughout the BMC operation. Management refused to accept this principle and the end result was serious labor disputes that led to strikes and walkouts. The hotbed of such activity was at the Triumph operation in the north. There was hardly a month without some form of work stoppage and/or walkout.

This situation slowly spread throughout the whole BMC operation and by 1961 the corporation was in serious financial trouble with the government pushing for a solution. Triumph went on the selling block to be purchased by British Leyland, Britain's largest producer of trucks and buses. No one believed that this would succeed but through good management, some real capital investment, and a lot of pruning, by 1963 Leyland Triumph reported a profit.

Back at the ranch the British Motor Corporation continued its old policy of independent achievement but did concentrate all sports car production at the MG Abingdon factory. This may sound advantageous but in reality this factory was

little more than an assembly plant with most of the components being made throughout the UK. The car bodies were made at Press Steel in Oxford, the engines and gearbox were made at the Morris/Austin Engine works, the electrical components made in Birmingham by Lucas and so on. Every component was fitted by hand but to be fair it should be noted that air driven tools were installed in the 1960s! Twenty years had passed since the first British cars hit the American shores yet the dealerships were still scattered and supplies of spare parts usually way behind demand.

By 1970 it was obvious that some form of action was needed if the British Motor industry was to survive and by 1971 BMC had bit the dust and British Leyland became the proud owner of MG, Morris, Austin, Triumph and Jaguar. British Leyland was now the major vehicle producer in the UK and of course started to lose money. Various cuts were made, workers laid off and industrial disputes increased. Once again the government stepped in with more cash remembering that unemployed workers still vote! The British taxpayer now owned about 40% of the British motor industry although the dividend return was not that exciting as production fell and prices increased.

The introduction of the Ford Mustang in 1964 should have woken up the British sports car industry in much the same way that the Volkswagen Beetle became the flavor of month in the same year pushing out what was left of the British small family car market with the exception of the Mini. The original Mustang was a superb example of what the American car owner wanted. Reliable, sporty in design and featuring a mid-size power unit with a modern gearbox. A few comforts, but not too many, and a choice of soft top or GT style. Now add an attractive price with a national distribution and service operation where spares were always available. Keep this design policy for a few years and you could push all the European imports into the sea, well almost all!

But Detroit could not get out of the 1950's desire for size as illustrated by the Corvette that should have been a world winner, but not with a 300 horse power engine! The "Bigger is Better" policy to increase sales seemed to be the general marketing attitude from Detroit. Just how wrong can anyone be?

The Datsun Z-series presented more of a threat to what remained of the British market but they were

more expensive and just as prone to rust and decay as any British product. The merger of BMC and Leyland Triumph also helped to strengthen the British position and gave them a second chance in the world's export market even though this new creation was still fighting to get their balance sheet in the black.

Leyland did manage to achieve some degree of centralization with the Mini now being produced in one central plant and the successful MGB in another. Parts supply was also centralized and there was even a Leyland design team that worked in cooperation with their colleagues in other production plants. The Triumph Spitfire had taken off and was gaining its own market share while the Triumph 2000 sedan had a waiting list. So, despite a poor return on investment things seemed to have come together for this new collection of odd bedfellows now named British Leyland. US sales started to increase and new service facilities/dealerships were being established. 1972/73 returned to being growth years for US development and the 1973 Board report from Leyland was full of upbeat news on all fronts.

Then the bombshell hit the import market when the US Government introduced rigid new standards for car exhaust emissions and car safety. Some say this was a direct ploy on the part of the US Government to curb imports, especially from Japan who were gaining a strong market share by the mid 1970s. It certainly hit the British imports and many forecast that this was the end for British export to the new world. The type of investment required to meet these standards was extensive and the British government said a firm "No" to any request for further assistance.

As to be expected, sales decreased as makeshift modifications were made to existing models like the ugly large rubber bumpers fitted to the MG range to meet American crash requirements and the air pollution equipment fitted to the small engines of the British sports cars that reduced performance and gas economy. The Japanese seemed to take these regulations in their stride with major investment in their growing car industry and good promotion techniques that gave them an excellent network of dealerships in a

matter of a few years. Something the British had never achieved despite being the first on the block with a twenty-year head start.

In one last bid to save the British export sports car market the combined design teams put forward a completely new concept based on the wedge principle of aerodynamic design. All work design in every other production plant was put on hold including the now tired MGB that had been around for almost 18 years and desperately needed a complete overhaul.

In the fall of 1976 the Triumph TR7 was launched in a fanfare of publicity both sides of the Atlantic. It was almost as bad as the famous Edsel disaster except that British Leyland did not have the Ford reserves to overcome the situation. In desperation with the hope that they could get future MG owners to move over to this new creation they closed the MG plant in 1980, almost a scared shrine to millions of MG owners throughout the world. They did this despite the fact that the old tired and now under powered MGB sold a record 34,794 cars that same year, a figure that the TR7 never got close too throughout its five year existence. This action also lost them what was left of the export market for British sports cars.

The Mazda RX7 and the revamped Datsun Z range soon filled the gap left by MG and the Triumph Spitfire; the once mighty British motor industry was now dead even though the corpse would not lie down. Export virtually vanished apart from the Rollers and a revamped Jaguar now under private ownership that was almost back to its original quality level. The recession in 1979/80 coupled by the increasing value of the British pound against the US dollar helped to create this sad situation. Every Leyland sports car sold in the USA during that period lost about \$100. The Triumph TR7 lost three times that much during its short lifetime. What was wrong with this car? Well I could say everything but that's not quite fair.

It was ahead of its time, but in step with previous vehicles had poor quality control. Now add the fact that it had serious electrical problems that took months to sort out. Had the car been fully tested for about two years as was the normal procedure for any new vehicle and had some serious market research been carried out to see what the next generation of sports car owners wanted it might have been a success, but I guess you could say the same thing about the Yugo!

What is left of the British Motor industry is not even a shadow of the former glory. Vauxhall, the GM British company who have made cars in the UK for over 75 years, are relocating to Europe, and Ford UK already has. The independent Morgan Sports Car Company produces about twelve cars a week and has a two-year waiting list. Jaguar is now a part of Ford [Tata] who seems to have done a first class job with this marquee. The famous Mini is now in the capable hands of BMW who look like they have another winner on their hands with an international waiting list for this car. MG seems to have risen from the ashes once again and is now being produced in China.

How successful this may turn out to be is still an open question. Will a new MG ever grace the highways of the US is a doubtful wish. And why should it? If they make a thousand cars a week in China it will take twenty years to meet the demand in that country. Britain had such a wonderful opportunity to develop a world market for quality goods, the world was truly their oyster in 1947. During these post war years Britain developed the first Jet airliner, the De Havilland Comet, and held the world speed record for over a decade both on land and water, but corporate greed, poor management, reactionary unions, and government interference managed to kill the goose that could have continued to lay the golden egg.

The lesson is simple, keep free of government handouts, they will come back to haunt you (Ed. Note: seems especially prophetic in this day, doesn't it?) Change management often, especially on the design and marketing side. Watch the competition every day and never take the market for granted. Create good labor relations but don't allow your company to be held ransom by rogue unions and wild cat strikes. Remember, Big is not always Better. The idea of creating groups of companies under one umbrella without any real power to change policy, or worse still, being unwilling to make any changes is a sure road to the poor house. There is a lesson to be learned from the demise of the British Motor Industry by our friends in Detroit but, as is often the case, we seldom look at history when planning the future. **Geoff Wheatley**

Another Side Of Bruce

Neil Griffin has taken the time to write a few thoughts about Bruce Nichols and his early "Bad Axe" meets in the early days of the Michigan Rowdies. Bruce had been living in Grand Rapids, MI when the club was formed, but eventually moved to greener pastures in Bad Axe, MI where he held a series of now almost legendary meets. Let's take a step back in time to those early days of "Iron Men and Wooden Cars".....

Those early Bad Axe Meets at Bruce Nichols place were quite different from today's week end events. Today's meets are great fun and do require more work, but definitely are not the same. For many of us, the most difficult task was not finding the time to go, but to keep the car running long enough to make it all the way without overheating (*ed: see Bruce's tech tip this issue*), or losing your electrical power thru the Mickey Mouse arrangement of dual 6-volt batteries, cables, and a bayonet type post attachment that these cars originally used. This is a good example of the German's comment that "the British do it the same way they did 30 years ago, and it was wrong then!"

After arrival time from this adventurous trip, events usually did not begin until a blue MGA from Canada arrived, loaded with tents, sleeping bags, and, of course, beer. The front seats were occupied by two angelic souls by the names of Rob McKenzie and Stew Beatty, all primed to raise hell. This is where many of us, including Thelma and myself, were introduced

to the "Road Rallye" and Bruce's endless imagination, with only God and Bruce knowing where you and your car might end up. I'm still not sure how Dick Feight and I ended up in that corn field, but we did end up with first place. For this Bruce presented us with a beautiful set of hand-thrown ceramic mugs which I still cherish very much to this day.

After this came the Nichol's "Feast of Feasts" accompanied by bratts, bratts, and more bratts from his bar-b-cue, that seemed destined to burn forever. While we kicked tires, examined rust holes and oil

leaks, the children were kept busy riding Bruce's horse, playing with the dog (whose translated name I remember but better not print) and, of course, climbing that fabulous old tree in the back yard. This was too good a meet to leave early from, so we would put up "tent city" in the back yard and close a perfect day beneath the stars, except for that occasional soul crawling around in the moonlight retrieving apples that had somehow found their way underneath his sleeping bag.

I write this since Bruce Nichols thumbnail sketch in the Jan-Feb "A-Antics" showed only a very small part of his many contributions to the formation of the Michigan Rowdies. I hope this will help to at least fill in some of the many gaps in the history of those early days. *by Neil Griffin*



'RUN WHAT YOU BRUNG' GYMKHANA-May 15, Sat. 11 am



ATTENTION!

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

ALL ROWDIES, IT'S TIME TO SHOW OFF YOUR DRIVING SKILLS. BREAK OUT YOUR FAVORITE DRIVING HAT AND GLOVES. FINISH THAT FINAL TUNE-UP AND JOIN US FOR SOME HOT LAPS AROUND THE TRACK. LADIES, THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO SHOW YOUR BETTER HALF YOU CAN OUT DRIVE HIM! NOT ONLY CAN YOU WIN A PRIZE, YOU ALSO EARN BRAGGING RIGHTS FOR THE FASTEST TIME!

We will begin with a driver's meeting at 10:30 a.m. and timed event starts at 11:00 a.m. on **Saturday, May 15, 2010.**

We will all gather at **Sidetrack** in **Depot Town** afterwards to celebrate and award prizes. Directions: US-23 to East I-94 to exit 183. Go south ¼ mile to **Bosal Industries** on the right. (Building sits back . . . watch for the MG sign.)

From I-275 follow I-94 west to exit 183 and go south ¼ mile. **Bosal Industries** is on the right. Watch for the MG sign. Any questions, call **Curt Smith** at 734-323-7712 or **Jon Burchwell** at 734-476-3009.





THE
HISTORIC

Holly Hotel

248/634-5208 110 Battle Alley, Holly, Michigan 48442



Afternoon Victorian Tea at the Holly Hotel...

Sunday August 1st 2010

It's time for our annual MG Tea Run. This year it will be held at the historic Holly Hotel, Holly, MI. No longer just an Inn, Michigan's Holly Hotel is a nationally-known American restaurant, listed on the United States Register of Historic Places. The hotel is the essence of award-winning regional and classical cuisine, with late Queen Anne Victorian architecture, and a loyal following since 1891.

We will enjoy a set tea of three elegant courses, served on traditional English china and steaming hot imported tea is served in fancy silver and ceramic pots. First course is served warm, consisting of English-style scones and muffins with Devonshire cream and flavored butters. Second course arrives minutes later with petite tea sandwiches, quiches and canapés. Third course is a "sweets" course of fruits. Pastries, cakes or tortes.

As previous years, the Tea Run divides into 2 parts. We will have an approximately 1 hour drive exploring the countryside around historic Holly followed by the tea at the hotel. The drive will begin at 2.15pm at M59 / Milford Road intersection at the McDonald's parking lot north-east corner. Alternatively, you can meet us for afternoon tea at 4.00pm at the Holly Hotel. We have arranged special MG-only parking in Battle Alley, adjacent to the hotel.

The cost per person will be \$10 USD, payable in advance to Ailene Butcher (248 685 8610) or Jan Tucker (248 676 0986). They need your cheque before July 10th 2009 as we have to make a firm commitment on numbers. Please send cheques to Ailene Butcher at 3103 Exeter Drive, Milford, MI, 48380.

NAMGAR GT-35
A GET TOGETHER OF THE FIRST
MAGNETTE-TUDE



JULY 26 - 29 2010
DELANAN, WISCONSIN

NAMGAR GET-TOGETHER EVENT

NAMGAR GT-35 July 26-29, 2010

The Milwaukee and Great Lakes Motorcar Group, also known as MG3, is very pleased to be the host chapter and invites you to Wisconsin for what could be a "once in a lifetime event".

Besides the cool resort venue up North in July, what else would make this such a special Get Together? MG3 with the Z Magnette Group, ZMG, will be featuring the Magnette. This is your opportunity to see what could be the largest gathering of this special car that is part of our registry and learn more about it. For more information, visit: gt35.namgar.com

Rowdies "Orphan-Car-Show" Meet

Ypsilanti, MI June 6, 2010

Riverside Park- 9 am

See the cars, trucks, motorcycles, and motor scooters of yesteryear that are no longer being manufactured at the show in the morning, and socialize at the **Griffin's** house any time after 12 noon, with hot dog roasting over an open fire, tire kicking, & lie-telling. Hot dogs, buns, and fire furnished; bring your own lies. Dish to pass not required, but gladly accepted.

Neil & Thelma Griffin 44492 Robson, Belleville, MI (734-697-7419)



The show is held at Riverside Park in Ypsilanti and starts at 9:00 am and is the 13th Annual Orphan Car Show. Just down the street, at 100 East Cross you can view the Miller Museum, the world's last Hudson dealership.



THE TWISTY BITS TOUR

Sunday May 23rd 2010

We start at 10.00 am at Meijer's parking lot on the Ann Arbor-Saline Road, just south east of I94 at the exit #175.

We will drive about 50 miles around some nicely curved roads. All roads are paved, although some might be classed in the "uneven pavement" category. We will drive through much of the German-settled area of southeast Michigan, plus see some small lakes and two small towns typical of the area.

We will stop at the historic and restored 1835 Sharon Mill and participate in a picnic lunch. So either bring your wicker hamper from home or purchase something just prior to leaving the Meijer's lot. Last time many MG's had their wicker picnic hampers tied to their boot racks and we enjoyed a splendid hour sitting on the grass at the mill.

Then we will continue through the countryside for another 50 miles, ending up back at the Meijer's lot.

The tour distance is 101 miles and we should finish around 3 pm, so we can all get home before the Lucas bewitching hours of darkness.



Please call Philip Wiltshire at 586 354 8855, or e-mail me at pwiltshire@comcast.net with any questions or to let me know that you intend to drive along with us.

This is a joint W.D.M.G.C and Michigan Rowdies (MGA's) event.





KIMBER BIRTHDAY PARTY PHOTOS

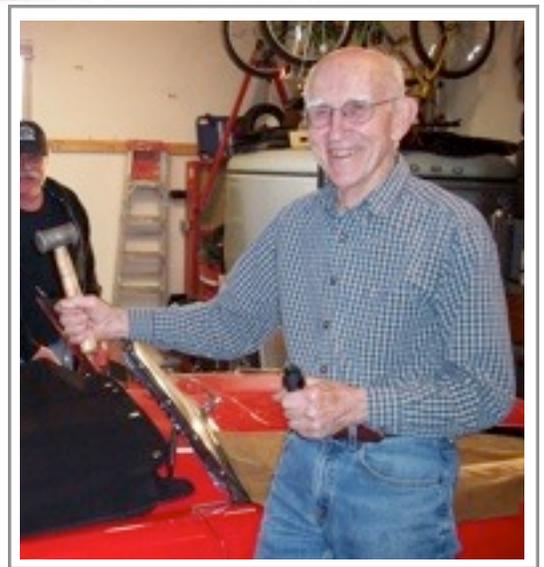
Clockwise from Top Left: Mitzi & Larry Pittman, Mark & Margie Barnhart; Delhi parking lot; Good turnout for Cecil; Cathy Holliday, Mike Moder, Neil Griffin, Curt Smith, Steve Holliday; Neil & Thelma Griffin, Curt & Stephanie Smith, Brian Beery, John McMullan; Rich Pollion, Dave Quinn, Phil Wiltshire, John Zajac, Bruce Nichols, Bill & Mary Ellen Weakley.



Kimber Photos Continued....Left to Right, Top Down: Cathy & Steve Holliday, Dave Smith's front yard; Dave Quinn with his prize winning car; The Boys in the Garage; Winged Spirit Of Ecstasy; MG's and a TVR; Big "Roller"; "Go Faster" Talk; Cake and Regalia

We have been re-introducing the Rowdies to long-time members as well as new ones through a member profile section. I will plan to run 2 brief member profiles each issue with some photos as well. We started with Bruce Nichols. Now here's 4 more familiar faces. Please send me a brief story & photo upon request as I work my way through our membership. Thanks, Ken Nelson, editor-in-chief

Member Profile-Neil & Thelma Griffin



*Above: Neil and Thelma
Above right: With their "A"*

(Story on Next Page)

*Above: Neil with his
favorite car repair tool*

My first encounter with the MGA was in 1961 when one of our radiomen at the airport where I worked had just bought a brand new "A" and offered me a ride in it. After the ride I wondered to myself why would anyone would to buy a piece of junk like that?

Thelma and I had always wanted a TD, so I bought one setting in the field near our house, drove it home and tore it apart. I could see

this was going to take some time, so I bought an "A" from a friend of mine so we might have an MG to drive during the TD restoration.

This was a big mistake. Thelma and I had a ball driving the "A"; after 43 years, three trips to California, three trips to the east coast, a trip to Texas, a trip to Florida, numerous trips to Canada, and many places in between, the TD is still setting in the barn in bushel baskets awaiting restoration (*Ed. note: see "for sale"*)

It's been wonderful having friends across the entire US and is a comfort when traveling these long distances. We occasionally limped into our final

destination, but the "A" has never left us stranded on the road and any problems we may have had were quickly resolved by this host of friends.

Traveling to meets has always been an adventure, whether a local event to greet old friends, or a national GT to meet new friends and renew friendships from last years event. This will always be something to cherish.

Our most humbling experience was being awarded the Mac Spears Award at Chattanooga as Mac was a very good friend of ours and we miss him very much.

At this time we have driven an MGA to more GT's than any other NAMGAR member and it has left us with many happy memories we shall never forget.

Neil Griffin

Ed Note: I wish I could say I've never been stranded by my "A". Most of us have had Neil fix our cars more than once during a breakdown on a trip. Being a master mechanic and body man has something to do with his lack of being stranded! And thanks to Thelma for being such a good sport to put up with Neil's top down motoring in all conditions!



Member Profile-Steve & Diane Mazurek

We are the itinerate couple from the Michigan Chapter. We say Michigan Chapter because the group didn't get its "Rowdie" moniker until long after we helped to establish the group and were off to another part of the country.

We were right alongside Bruce Nichols when he stood at GT-1 in 1976 and declared that Michigan would be the first NAMGAR chapter and that *it* would host another get-together in two months. Bruce didn't bother mentioning this before-hand to the other three Michigan folks present: Diane, Steven and Bruce's then wife, Jan. That meant that we had to scramble and get an MGA once we returned from the GT! And, we did – a white 1960 1600. We never imagined that our MGAventures would take us to every NAMGAR GT since.

When we were transferred to Columbus, Ohio in 1977, we established the first Ohio Chapter, along with Dave and Barb Ream. During our time there, besides hosting regular chapter activities, we also hosted a regional event at Burr Oak State Park in the Hocking Hills of southeast Ohio. In 1977 Diane also purchased a 1959 1500 yellow mess of an MGA to restore. One highlight of our years in Ohio was when we were contacted by *Automobile Quarterly* magazine for an MGA layout. We contacted several members and made arrangements for the photos. The photos, with accompanying article, were published in Volume XVII, Number 1, First Quarter 1979 of *Automobile Quarterly*.

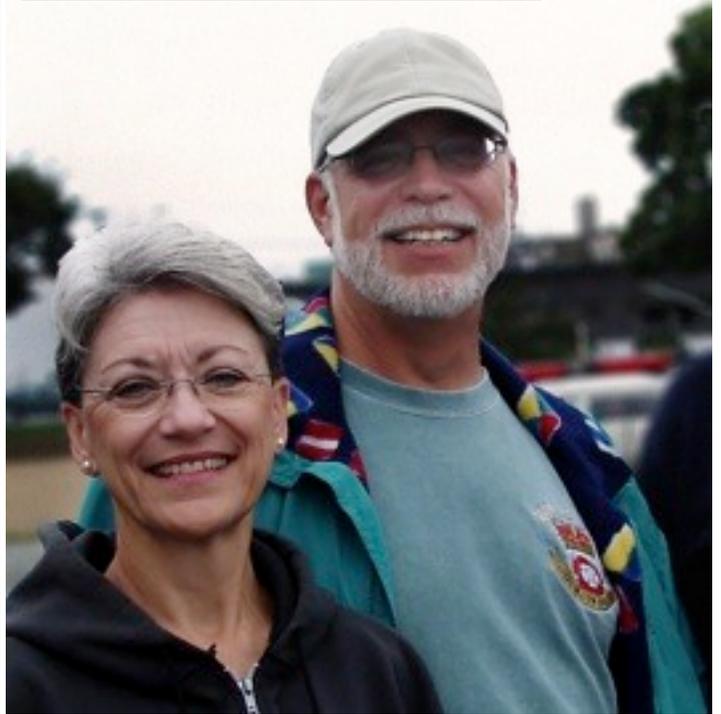
In 1980, we were back in Grosse Pointe, Michigan and once again participating in the now "Rowdie" activities, including hosting GT-10. Then our jobs shifted to the Chicago-land area in 1987. PRNCZ, the restoration car, came with us. We've been in Lake Barrington, Illinois, for the past twenty two years, with the exception of a short time living in Pasadena, California. But we don't mention that much.

Steven has served as NAMGAR's Chairman from 1983 through 1988 and is currently the editor of *MGA!* When he became Chairman, Diane continued on as GT Coordinator until the task was transferred to NAMGAR's Vice Chairman She has served as the copy editor for *MGA!* and as technical writer for the past nine years. We were honored with the Mac Spears Founder's Award at GT-25. Steven created and maintained the Rowdies' first website, also managing the member database until recently.

When younger, we both were aspiring musicians, which we abandoned once we found out that for a vast majority it was a lot of work for modest pay. Now that we're essentially retired, we've reactivated our serious interest in music: Diane in piano, Steven in accordion. Steven is currently studying with Maestro Stanislav Venglevski. *Steve and Diane Mazurek* (photos next page)



Left: *Steve and Diane with their good friend Mickey at GT-8*



Above: *Steve and Diane as they appear today*



Left: *Mickey and Minnie as they appear today. Notice one couple hasn't aged much?*



Rowdie Hats and Key Fobs are available now from regalia. Don't be caught driving your "A" without these two essential items. One should dangle from the dashboard and the other from your head. Your choice on which goes where.



HOT WHEELS TECH TIP-BRUCE NICHOLS

All right I should have written this for an earlier edition but there is still time before hot weather sets in. We have gone through this in the past but people forget and I still get calls and complaints of MGAs running warm or hot. So let's review this again.

Make sure your timing, point dwell and carbs are set correctly. If not they can and will cause you car to run warm. We won't discuss the methods of setting the above as it can be found in the manual and past newsletters. We are going to take a closer look at the cooling system. First make sure your gauge is accurate. Replace it with another or use an infra red thermometer or a standard thermometer. Next take a look at the upper and lower hoses. It they are the unribbed type I would replace them as the smooth sided hoses can (and will) collapse at speed. Finally, the radiator.

If you don't know the condition or the history of the radiator you make want to take it to a radiator shop and have them 'boil it out'. This is when they place it in hot solution of an acid or strong base (lye) to dissolve the scale in side the radiator making for better heat transfer. This also takes care of any bugs stuck in the radiator. You can do this at home. CAUTION, WEAR SAFETY GLASSES. Go to a paint store and buy a half gallon of Muriatic Acid (hydrochloric acid). CAUTION! This stuff will burn you. If exposed, flush with lots of water and follow precautions on bottle. Mix the acid with water for 50% solution. MIX ACID TO WATER. Plug the upper and low radiator outlets and pour in the mixture. Cap and slowly turn the radiator up slide down then right side up. Set it flat for half an hour then do it again. Complete the cycle three or four times then flush with copious amounts for water, flush with a baking soda solution to neutralize any remaining acid. Flush with water. If you know for sure that your radiator is clean skip to the next step. (ed. note: if you

are uncomfortable playing with chemicals, stick with the radiator shop for the above)

Drain the coolant and take it out of the car. Using a soft brush remove the bugs. Check the picture accompanying this article. The picture shows the amount of bugs removed from the front of my radiator after 3,000 miles of driving. Every one of these bugs' bodies stopped air from getting through the radiator.



Clean the radiator with low pressure water. No high pressure please as it may bend vanes obstructing air flow. Fill a laundry tub about 10 inches with water and add a half cup of dish detergent, mix and submerge the radiator. Keep submerged for a day or two. The detergent will soften the stuck bugs

making for easier removal. Take the radiator and pull it up for a second or two then submerge again. Do this several times then clean with low pressure (from the end of a garden hose) from the back side. Set aside for several days to dry.

O.K. The radiator is now dry enough for the next stage. I know the following will sound absurd but every bug or bent radiator vane will stop air from passing through. Arm yourself with a few broom straws, tooth picks and a small flat blade screw driver. Look thru the radiator from back to front and using the boom straws or tooth picks poke out any remaining bugs. You can do this while watching TV as TV takes 8% of your concentration, the other 92% you can use on your radiator. Use the screw driver to straighten any bet vanes (be gentle). Inspect and give it a light coat of semi-gloss (or flat) black paint.

You're not done yet. Get a piece of window screen the size of the radiator and mount it by using fine wire to go between the vanes at the corners. Now you will not have to go through the above again. When the bug collections get big, take the screen out and give it a shake or clean it with a soft brush. I know the

above, particularly the bug removal, sound flaky but any thing that impedes air flow will make the car run hot. I've done the above with my MGAs for years and my MG rarely gets warm, let alone hot.

Are you done yet? No. We haven't looked at coolant yet. Yes, plain water exchanges heat better than anti-freeze, but it doesn't contain any water pump lubricant. If you are going to run with plain water you

will have to go to the parts store and buy a can/bottle of pump lube. Running with 30% anti-freeze will give you sufficient lubricant and increase the boiling point of your coolant. If you are going to add one of the wetting agent products approach with caution. I have tried a few that actually increased my running temperature. I currently use a product by Red Line.

Are done now? Yes.

SEAT BELT TECH TIP-DAVE QUINN

I was never completely satisfied with my 3-point seat belt installation in my MGA. I installed Clarke Spares excellent 3-point kit per the instructions for proper strength. However, I discovered the belt did not fit across my hips and thigh area like in a modern car belt. Instead the belt rode up my stomach unless I kept it so tight I could barely breathe. I was concerned with the potential submarine effect if I elected not to over tighten it. Todd Clarke said he had not heard of this complaint before, so perhaps my beer gut contributed to the issue.

First off, I should explain why I felt the need to swap out my original lap belts for a three-point system. One picture should be worth a thousand words:



The injuries that both my passenger and I experienced resulted from the jack-knife effect of our bodies with old style lap belts. We both went on the band wagon to encourage three-point systems after the 2004 accident, and we both installed them in our MGA's.

My inexpensive and hopefully safe solution, as shown in photo below, was to have the driver's seat belt anchor point on the transmission tunnel side extended forward by installing a flexible hard plastic seat belt anchor cover like you would find in a modern car. Mine came from a 1993 Dodge Spirit with a tan interior obtained from a salvage yard vehicle for \$10. I looked at a variety of belt anchor covers before selecting the Spirit. The cover extended the lap belt forward without modifying the anchor point and without interference to the seat. Now the belt no longer rides up my stomach, fits more like a modern belt, and allows me to tighten it without discomfort. I make no claims on this setup other than it improves the comfort level while driving and holds me snuggly into the seat cushion. I don't know if it makes any compromises to the belt's intended operation. You must be the judge of that. I am not a safety engineer and hope I never have to test it.



For Sale

1952 MG-TD \$8,000

In Storage Last 40 Years

No Damage With Some Surface Rust

Car Disassembled

Includes \$7,000 In New Parts

Neil Griffin 734-697-7419

(Ed. Note: This sounds like the proverbial barn-find to me folks. Rumor has it this was once used as Hitler's staff car during the bombing of London. Call Neil for further details.)

MGA Parts:

I have some **MGA parts** I would like to sell. Mostly body parts, such as a hood in perfect condition. If you are interested let me know and I will take inventory and send pictures. Kevin Steen 231 995-7879 ksteen@howardenergy.com

Howard Energy Co., Inc. 125 Park St., Suite 250 Traverse City, MI 49684

Philip Wiltshire is again organizing a Stratford, Ontario MG outing this year-come visit a foreign country in your MGA!! Call Philip at 248-676-0986 (h) or 586-354-8855 (c) for tickets and planning.



Friday/ Saturday/Sunday June 18th, 19th and 20th 2009

The musical "Kiss Me Kate" at the Festival theatre.

Friday June 18th - We will be traveling to Stratford leaving the Detroit area mid-morning, or Saturday June 19th - A second convoy will be leaving on the Saturday morning from the M59 and I94 area and arriving at St Mary's early afternoon. It's your choice, as we normally have 2 convoys heading for Stratford that weekend.

Saturday June 19th - "Kiss Me Kate"; 8.00 pm performance

Synopsis - As backstage bickering between the co-stars of a musical version of *The Taming of the Shrew* threatens to sabotage opening night, along come a couple of gangsters with a gambling debt to collect. The result is hilarity on and off the stage - all punctuated by Cole Porter's unforgettable melodies and wickedly witty lyrics.

Music and lyrics by Cole Porter

We have booked the Westover Inn Hotel once again (built 1867) at nearby St Mary's for the Friday and Saturday evenings.

Call the Westover at 519-284-2977 for rooms or check other lodging at <http://www.townofstmarys.com/discover/accommodations/accommodations.aspx?id=35>



MAGNETTE MARK III

Pedigree saloon with debonair lines and dashing twin-carburettor performance. Panoramic vision fore and aft. Big-capacity luggage boot. Luxuriously appointed interior, with polished Indian walnut fascia-panel and real leather upholstery. Safety glass throughout.

MGA 1600 (All top)

Power with punch and flexibility. Speed with rock-like stability. The trimmest lines and the toughest chassis. The instant response of fade-free front disc brakes. These are features that put today's higher-powered MGA in the front rank of British sports cars.

Safety  *Fast!*

Drive To GT-35 In July And See Both Models of These Fine Classic MG's!

